

would often stay all day Sunday with the Cozads. I'm sure those Sundays were the girl's best college memories.

I admire those who have lived the kind of life that Clovadell did. When it comes my time to quit this life, I hope that my influence will have been half of what hers was.

What I really hope for, though, is that the Lord will approve of my life. It is possible to live a good life and still be despised. Jesus taught us this fact. No one did more good than our Lord. "...Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people." (Matthew 9:35). Jesus was moved with compassion for mankind (vs. 36). He fed people who were hungry (Matthew 14:17-21). He saved a woman from death (John 8:3-11). He wept over the death of His friend Lazarus (John 11:35). Even when Jesus was arrested, falsely charged, and threatened with death, He responded to these terrible things without threatening and anger (Isaiah 53:7; Matthew 27:12, 14).

Yet, for all of the Lord's sacrificial service to men, He was hated. He was despised and afflicted by men (Isaiah 53:3). He was not held to be a person of beauty but one of contempt (vs. 2). Finally, at the end of His days, His own people screamed at Pilate: "*His blood be upon us and our children*" (Matthew 27:25). As a final indignity, the Jews demanded that Pilate release Barabbas, a known criminal, and crucify Jesus (vs. 26).

I always wish that I could measure up to the example of fine Christians like Clovadell Cozad, but even more so I want to measure up to the example of my Lord, Jesus Christ. He is the one who set the example that I must follow always (1 Peter 2:21; 1 Corinthians 11:1). May we all look heavenward more than we do, and may we strive harder every day to live like Christ did.

Church of Christ

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Material:

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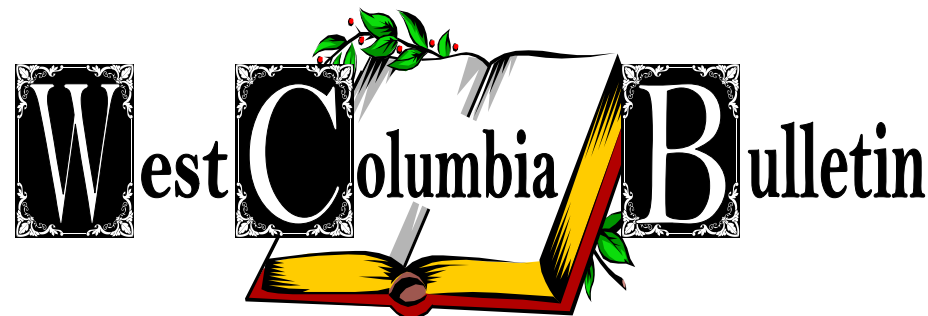
Schedule Of Services...

Sunday:

Bible Classes	9:00 a.m.
Worship	9:50 a.m.
Worship	6:00 p.m.

Wednesday:

Bible Classes	7:00 p.m.
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December 13, 2020

When A Faithful Christian Dies

David Weakas

David said: "*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints*" (Psalms 116:15).

I have made it a habit in the funeral services that I preach to include a thought that I believe is important: Jesus Christ is the judge, not me. All of the good that we say about the dead is for our comfort and benefit, but in the end, only the Lord knows the true score of a Christian's life.

However, when a faithful Christian dies, we have a degree of confidence, based on what we've witnessed in his or her life, that the Christian will spend eternity in heaven.

I was reminded of this fact

when I received news this week of the death of Clovadell Cozad, a Christian from Macon, Missouri. Clovadell is one of mine and Perri's favorite people. She and her husband, Olen were the backbone of the church in Macon for many years. She loved the Lord more than anything else in her life, she read the scriptures every single day of her adult life, and took copious notes on many thousands of sermons preached by gospel preachers from around the country. She fed members of the church every Sunday, and even housed three college girls from Kirksville who attended services with us on the Lord's day. These girls

ONE STEP LEADS TO ANOTHER

David Weaks

Liberals have long defended their digressions with the claim that they were only taking “small steps” away from God’s pattern. This is a foolish and pointless argument that should be obvious to all. But, in case it is not so obvious to you, try the following experiment: draw a vertical line down a sheet of paper. Label the line: “God’s pattern.” Now, pick any point on either side of this line and draw a small dot. Next, with a straight edge ruler, draw a second line from “God’s pattern” through the middle of the dot, and continue that line for as far as you wish. Next, pick a point along that new tangent line and put another dot, and then another, and then another. What does this show you? If you have good eyesight and an honest heart, you will note that this little drawing you have made shows that your first small step away from the pattern led to the next small

step, which led to the next small step, until you found yourself far away from the God’s pattern. Where did the problem start? Honestly, now - where did the problem start? It started with the first “small” step away from the pattern.

Folks, this is how apostasy works. Christians who are schooled in the pattern of God’s word (Hebrews 8:5) and who are taught to respect it (1 Peter 4:11) sometimes decide to step out into what they think are the greener pastures of human reasoning. That first step, and the desire to take it, is where the problem always begin.

Churches of Christ did not suddenly sprout singing groups, and guitars in worship services. These innovations among liberals started with the desire of a handful of brethren to buck God’s pattern of *a capella* singing in worship (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16) and bring a melodeon into the

worship at Midway, KY. In 1859 a man by the name of *L.L. Pinkerton* believed that musical instruments could augment Christian worship (he claimed the singing of the members was so bad it scared off the rats), and so he introduced the melodeon one Sunday morning at the Midway church. This finally split churches of Christ. A man named Thompson Parrish tried to heal the damage by stealing and hiding the melodeon, but his efforts accomplished nothing. The melodeon was eventually found, and it stands today as a prized artifact in the Library of *Midway University*.

The instrument in question was a tiny little thing, a fifty-key “pump organ.” It was smaller than a classroom student desk. But, look what mischief it created! It hastened the creation of the denomination known as the *First Christian Church: Disciples of Christ*.

This denomination traces its origins to the Restoration Movement, but it bears little resemblance to anything taught in the New Testament about the Lord’s church.

Unfortunately, the little melodeon’s damage was not

limited to the creation of a new denomination; the spirit that brought it to worship in Midway has been revived among liberal churches of Christ. Here we are at the end of the year 2020, one hundred and sixty-one years after the melodeon incident, and many churches of Christ now have well established “*contemporary worship services*” in which instrumental music plays a large part. These churches also have husband and wife “*praise teams*,” “*worship leaders*,” and “*worship ministers*.” Where in the Bible can we find any of these things.

Brethren, the problem with taking even one “small step” away from God’s pattern is that the first step is a repudiation of God’s authority by itself (Matthew 28:18), and then every step after the first one only cements the attitude of rebellion in the hearts of the saints. Moreover, each step after the first so-called “small” one gets increasingly large, taking us ever farther away from the truth.

There is just one solution to apostasy: never take the first step to begin with. If you do, then repent, and come back to the truth (Revelation 2:5, 16).